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Kearsarge Regional School District

Superintendent Winfried Feneberg

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement of Kearsarge Regional School District Superintendent Winfried Feneberg

NEW LONDON, New Hampshire -- The following is a statement from Kearsarge Regional School District Superintendent Winfried Feneberg:

"First and foremost, we hope you enjoyed the February recess. We understand that the news headlines have raised many alarms nationwide about viral activity, and we know there are questions and concerns about a group of students who recently returned from an overseas trip.

"SAU medical and administrative team members met today to review the latest recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services regarding the COVID-19 coronavirus. We have also consulted with our legal counsel and curriculum teams to ensure we are making the most responsible choices moving forward for our students.

"There are 35 Kearsarge Regional High School students who have returned to the U.S. after taking part in an educational trip to Europe. The students have traveled to Italy, France and the U.K. Although COVID-19 is present in Italy, students were in the Lombardy and Veneto region of the country for a very brief period of time and there is no indication that the students were exposed to the virus. We are also mindful that travel advisories and maps are changing seemingly on an hourly basis.

"Therefore, out of an abundance of caution, I am asking the students and staff who attended the trip to stay home from school next week, and return on Monday, March 9. This will ensure that a 14-day time period has elapsed from the time the students left the affected region.

"We will continue to monitor all students and follow the recommendations of CDC, concerning the presence of flu-like symptoms. We are also mindful that this is still flu season and influenza is considered a much more widespread risk than the coronavirus.

"Thankfully, we have a number of modern technological resources at our disposal. We are utilizing Google Classrooms, Skype, Facetime and a bevy of other tools to ensure that the students who are returning from abroad are able to continue their studies with as minimal an impact as possible.

"We encourage students to contact their teachers for opportunities to use telepresence and software tools on a class-by-class basis. Attendance at school will not be held against students for these physical absences. Teachers will be flexible and allow plenty of time for students to complete work.

"As our students and their families return from February break, we wish to share the following germ mitigation tips from the N.H. DHHS:

- Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing
- Wash hands frequently
- Avoid sharing drinks or smoking/vaping devices
- Disinfect surfaces that are frequently used
- Stay home when sick.

"We also wish to remind our community that there are currently no confirmed cases of the coronavirus in New Hampshire, according to the NH DHHS. However, flu is

widespread in New Hampshire, with thousands of confirmed cases so far this season. As always, the Kearsarge Regional School District will keep you informed of updates or changes as we are advised by our local and state departments of public health.

"Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as we work together to ensure a safe and productive return from February vacation."

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A message from the Kearsarge Regional School District

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